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ABSTRACT

Interviews and questionnaires were administered to black students and black and white faculty and administrators at seven universities to identify the principal problems related to the retention of black undergraduate students in higher educational institutions and to propose program alternatives and strategies for their retention and graduation from college. Poor academic preparation in secondary schools appears to be the main barrier to access to higher education at the universities studied. Once admitted, students tend to attribute academic failure to cultural/racial adjustment, financial problems, loneliness and alienation, hostility from white faculty and students, lack of counseling help, scarcity of black faculty models, and poor communication with black faculty. Recommendations are made regarding the responsibilities of predominantly white institutions in assuring access and graduation opportunities to black students in the following areas: admissions policies, recruitment, pre-college programs, orientation, counseling, cultural adjustment, white faculty/administrators, black faculty/administrators, contact with faculty, financial assistance, topics for further study, and data availability. (MK)

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Admissions and Retention Problems of Black Students at Seven Predominantly White Universities

Commissioned by:

The National Advisory
Committee on Black
Higher Education
and
Black Colleges and Universities
Department of HEW
U.S. Office of Education

Conducted by:

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Stanford University
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Introduction

This study was commissioned by the National Advisory Committee on Black Higher Education and Black Colleges and Universities, the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The study had a two-fold purpose:

1. To identify the principal problems related to the retention of black undergraduate students in institutions of higher education and to propose program alternatives and strategies for their retention and graduation from college.

and

2. To make recommendations regarding the responsibilities of predominantly white institutions in assuring access and graduation opportunities to black students.

Originally the investigation was to include the status of students in graduate and professional schools. Time allotment and scheduling constraints made this impossible.

Method

The investigator visited seven predominantly white universities, administering the questionnaire to and conducting personal interviews with black students, black faculty and administrators and white faculty and administrators.

The original design was to select one distinguished private university and one public state university from each of four geographical regions. Thus, the following were selected: Harvard and Rutgers in the East; Duke and the University of North Carolina,

Chapel Hill in the South; Chicago and Michigan in the Mid-west; and Stanford and the University of California at Los Angeles in the West.

Because of other HEW-related activity, the University of North Carolina declined to participate. UNC's refusal came too late to substitute another institution, so the study was carried out with seven universities participating: Duke, Chicago, Harvard, Michigan, Rutgers, Stanford and UCLA.

The letter of request was identical to all institutions, asking for meetings to be arranged with the following groups or persons:

1. Chairperson, faculty advisor and four or five members of the most populous black student organization.
2. Black students who are not members of black student organizations (seven or eight, including graduate students).
3. Dean of Students and/or Vice-President for Student Affairs.
4. Director of Admissions
5. Director of Financial Aid
6. Chairperson of the Faculty Senate
7. Director of Freshman Studies/Director of Developmental Studies (if such or similar administrator exists.)
8. Black faculty, administrators or support staff.

The amount of co-operation from the universities varied, ranging from Duke which complied with all requests, making students, administrators and faculty available, including the hosting of two

luncheons and a dinner, to one university which planned no meetings until I actually arrived on campus. Still another university arranged the meetings at six different sites on a vast campus, making it almost impossible to collect required data in the two days allotted for each campus visit.

Resultingly, the number of questionnaires administered and the number and quality of interviews conducted varied from campus to campus. However, in spite of the short period of time available to conduct the study, April 15-May 25, 1979, and the difficulties in collecting data, a good deal of useful information was acquired.

Findings

I. The Social Milieu

It is important to understand the social context in which the education of black students on predominantly white college campuses takes place.

Revealed both in their answers to the questionnaire and their discussion in in-depth interviews, black students, by and large feel depressed, lonely and alienated. They feel their universities are hostile places and their relationships with white professors and white students are often demoralizing. The only campus which was not at the time of the interviews beset by serious racial conflict and incidents was Duke. Yet, Duke students expressed many of the themes which were repeated frequently at the other universities. As one Duke student put it "I think black people could go through this entire university without learning anything about black contributions to America." Another Duke

student called the absence of black recognition in the curriculum "criminal." Other Duke students complained of "institutional racism" and of numerous examples of administrative and faculty efforts "to make us forget about our blackness." Blackness was seen by many, though not all, of the students as a positive characteristic to be cherished. White Duke administrators and faculty interviewed expressed the opinion that in the best interest of all students, race ought to be downplayed. This conflicting view between what most black students feel is good for their cultural-emotional development and what the majority of white faculty and administrators feel is good for the entire university is a source of considerable confusion and tension for black students.

At UCLA, Chicago, Michigan and Rutgers students complained of police harassment and referred specifically to the double standard by which campus security police frequently stop black students and require that they produce I.D.'s while making no such demands upon white students.

During the period of the interviews for this study, serious racial tensions existed at Rutgers, where black students and some black faculty were pressing demands upon the university administration to improve black life at Rutgers. In their several written communications to the university administration and state education officials the students expressed great concern over the following issues:

1. Lack of active recruitment of black students.
2. Changing admissions policies and standards which would

make black enrollment even more difficult.

3. The high attrition rate of black students.
4. Insufficient financial aid.
5. Lack of black faculty and staff and attrition rate of same.
6. Harassment by university police.

While a black rally over these issues was taking place on campus, a white student attempted to ride his motorcycle through the line of black marchers, resulting in forcible restraint of the cyclist and rumors of black attacks on white students.

Several written communications from university officials and meetings between the officials and the students took place, with the university attempting to assure students of its commitment to minority students. At the time of our interviews, black students remained unconvinced and were very angry.

At the University of Michigan, black students had drawn up a similar statement of concerns, including criticizing the university for investing in corporations which conduct business in South Africa.

Divestiture was a major issue at Chicago and Harvard, too. In addition, the Black Student Association at Harvard-Radcliffe was also involved in two more issues: saving the Black Studies Program and demanding that the Harvard Lampoon discontinue publishing racially offensive humor.

Last spring, a sign was painted on the steps of the administration building at UCLA, which read "nigers (sic) go home." The emblem of the Monroe Trotter House at the University of

Michigan was whitewashed and a swastika was painted on.

Students who react to issues which they believe vitally affect black life on campus or in the larger communities are sometimes subject to sanctions. A senior at Chicago who was involved in divestiture protests was called in by her advisor and reminded of "the possible effect her participation could have upon her law school recommendations." Sometimes the social lesson comes in the form of rewarding "appropriate behavior." An example of this may be seen in the recently-formed "Fannie Lou Hamer Society" at Harvard. Its members, all black, were said by the Dean of Students to have organized themselves as the antithesis of BSA-types whose protests over Black Studies, divestiture and the Lampoon were disapproved of by members of the Society. As one university administrator described it, the outlook of the Fannie Lou Hamer Society members was "so refreshing," that its first social event was attended by no less than the Harvard President and by the Dean of Students. Clearly their presence was a signal of support for appropriate, non-protest attitudes and behavior. Ironically, the late Fannie Lou Hamer, herself a giant of black protest, would not likely have attended the affair.

II. The Academic Milieu

At the highly prestigious institutions, Harvard, Stanford and Chicago and to a lesser extent Duke, black students as are others, are under enormous academic pressure. Their identities are defined for them by their academic disciplines. "I am black," or "female", or "from Durham" become secondary to "I am pre-med" or "pre-law" or "business."

Even students who have gone to primarily white or to racially mixed schools have never experienced the feeling expressed by one student that "my lab partner would cut my throat if it meant an "A" grade for him." This dog-eat-dog, Darwinian academic environment is totally foreign to the student from the all-black inner-city school.

Black studerts at the prestigious schools generally have both the intellectual ability and the academic skills to make it, but they usually have no prior experience with such rigorous academic requirements and such ruthless peer attitudes and practices. Their immediate task upon entry into the university is to learn how as one student put it "to master the university and its mythology." The more quickly students learn the language, the behavioral codes, expectations and other social nuances of the university community, the smoother will their adjustment be to the new environment.

This fierce competitiveness, born of exceedingly high standards and demands, practically forces black students to become combatants, not only with white peers and professors but also with each other. In the absence of elements of racism, the transition to the required "I am pre-med" might be no more difficult for blacks than for whites. However, the very real presence of racism, the constant reminders that black is allegedly inferior, just about makes it impossible to make that transition without carrying along racial identity also.

Black students at the public universities, Michigan, Rutgers and UCLA are not subjected to such rigorous academic requirements as at the private institutions studied, but neither are they the

academic elite, possessors of the superior secondary school training which characterizes the private university students. The academic adjustment for the student at the public university is much slower and much more difficult. Most of these students do not come from an academic environment where study and scholarship are valued. As one student described the environment at UCLA, "There is some black on black pressure not to achieve." Accordingly the student went on to say, "many students deliberately give the impression that they're not working very hard." The academic socialization of many of the public university black students has to include such factors as "permissibility to study (or to achieve academically)", "what to study" and "how to study".

III. Race Relations

Black students, at the campuses visited, appeared to associate primarily with other black students. At every campus the "Black Table" was in evidence in the dormitory dining rooms and in cafeterias. But there were also single or several black students eating at some of the white tables. Most of the campuses had largely black dormitories or blacks rooming with blacks in primarily white dormitories. Such arrangements are a matter of student, not university, choice. This act of grouping together is seen by the students not so much as black cohesiveness, but as a necessity in a hostile environment. As one Harvard student explained it, "I couldn't deal with white people so I had to associate with blacks. Blacks sit together (at dining tables) but have no cohesiveness. We don't stick up for each other." UCLA students described black-white relations as "no relations; they go their way and we go ours."

Other students at UCLA reported some black-white tensions in the dorms. Black women, at UCLA, were said to serve as deterrents to black men socializing with white women.

Stanford students have a black house, "Ujima," whose existence is both a haven for its residents and a source of black intra-group conflict. Residents are referred to as "in-crowd" and non-residents as "out-crowd." Such labeling, which the students do to themselves sets residents and non-residents apart. Yet "Ujima" is only a place to live; it is not a cultural center. It provides no counseling assistance to black students who criticize each other for being "super-black" or for being a proponent of "I am an individual." Students described Stanford as a place where depression is high, with few support systems for black students. It was expressed this way: "There are not institutions and resources to help students caught in a cultural, emotional, academic whirlwind." White administrators and faculty were said by one white official to take a position that "students are students," thus rejecting the cultural tastes and differences of black students.

Most black students interviewed at all of the universities spoke of white faculty and student hostility which manifests itself in a number of ways. Mentioned frequently was the alleged belief of white faculty and students that all or most blacks were special admits or the beneficiaries of quotas; that blacks had no legitimate place on campus. Professors were cited who were said to have openly verbalized these opinions.

Rutgers students complained of being told by their professors that classroom discussions and their compositions and

research papers which speak of black issues are irrelevant. The same sentiments were echoed at Stanford, UCLA, Michigan and Harvard, though at the latter students spoke of a more subtle approach to silencing discussion of black topics. Harvard communicates its cues not to discuss race: (1) through courses which don't mention blacks (2) by means of bibliographies which omit blacks and (3) with course syllabi which contain no references to blacks.

As mentioned earlier, another major concern with racial overtones is the manner in which campus police treat blacks, singling them out for identification presentation.

IV. Relations with Black Faculty and Administration

The feelings of black students toward black faculty were ambivalent and complex. On the one hand, both in questionnaire responses and interviews, the students expressed the strong need for more black faculty and administrative models. The hiring, tenuring and promoting of black faculty were crucial issues in the position papers prepared by students at Rutgers and Michigan. On the other hand, black faculty and administrators were heavily criticized for "not relating to blackness and to black students." Duke students contended that "some students were demoralized by black faculty who discourage their interest in black culture." Michigan students spoke of the small number of black faculty and charged that most of them don't relate to black students. With regard to black administrators, the students believe the placement of some blacks in high administrative posts is intended to keep students from protesting what they believe are their legitimate grievances: "Black administrators are either so frightened for

their jobs that they don't help black students or their orientation is such that they don't care or feel any responsibility to help."

At the same time, black students seemed to understand the dilemma which junior black faculty face: the traditional mandate of publish or perish. In most universities that dictum also means publish traditional, ergo, non-black, scholarship. With limited time and specific academic constraints, the struggling junior black faculty apparently often don't relate to and neglect black students. Such reasoning, however, does not seem to apply to tenured senior scholars.

Discussions and interviews with black faculty and staff did reveal that an overwhelming majority did understand the pressures, both academic and socio/racial and were concerned about the students' welfare. In fact, their responses to the questionnaire came much closer to student perceptions of the major issues and problems than they did to the perceptions of their white colleagues. Clearly, black faculty and administrators understand the problems of black students much better than white faculty and administrators do.

What black faculty and administrators do about their understandings is quite another matter. Except for black faculty at the University of Chicago, who last spring organized a mentor-student program in which each faculty member will assume mentorship responsibility for a small number of students, none of the other black faculty at schools visited have created any formal structure to help students with their problems. In each of the universities there were a few black faculty/administrators who by the nature

of their job assignments or from personal interest worked closely with black students. There were also a few who kept the students at arm's length and who did appear to fit the descriptions of indifference and discouragement pinned on them by students.

V. Admissions

Admissions and attrition statistics made available by the seven universities are incomplete. In some cases, the university claimed it had no data; in others, the data was simply not provided; still others, provided incomplete or conflicting data.

Nonetheless, from the incomplete data available it is clear that black admits at the private schools are small percentages, with some universities increasing, others decreasing since the early seventies. (Table I). The late sixties and early seventies represent a pivotal point in black admissions. Following the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., many American universities, included all of those in the study, initiated special efforts--sometimes special program--to increase black admissions.

Table I

Admissions

	1972	%	1973	%	1974	%	1975	%	1976	%	1977	%	1978	%
Chicago	39	5.5	45	6.6	33	4.2	36	4.5	38	4.4	18	2.2	26	3.2
Duke	--	-	74	6.3	83	6.3	-	-	-	-	87	-	87	-
Harvard	90	-	75	-	75	-	75	-	90	-	174	8.0	178	8.1
Michigan[a]	1100	5.7	1351	6.6	1246	6.2	1268	6.0	1364	6.4	1364	6.3	1339	6.2
Rutgers	-	-	-	-	709	10.9	722	10.4	718	11.0	947	12.0	1205	14.1
Stanford	294	4.5	300	4.6	304	4.6	327	5.0	331	5.0	340	5.2	356	5.4
UCLA[b]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

[a] The University of Michigan figures are approximations based upon data which do not clearly separate undergraduate enrollment from graduate and professional enrollment.

[b] UCLA provided no enrollment data, but the university's interim report "Undergraduate Enrollment Planning," indicates a present undergraduate enrollment of 19,200. A graph depicting the ethnicity of UCLA freshmen, from the mid-60's to the present, appears to indicate a slow increase in black freshmen from about 1% in the mid-sixties, to about 5% in the late 70's.

Duke, for example, which never admitted black undergraduates until 1963, admitted only a handful of students and did no recruiting of blacks until 1969, motivated strongly by the King assassination and by a subsequent take-over of the president's office by black students. An outgrowth of the student pressures was the institution of a Summer Transition Program (STP), the creation of an Office of Black Affairs (changed to "minority" affairs in 1978), an Afro-American Studies Program and the hiring of a black admissions staff person.

From its inception STP's purpose was to provide pre-college academic support and remediation for entering black freshmen whose records indicated such need. Gradually the program's racial composition has changed to include numbers of white women and a few white male athletes. University officials say the reason for the changes is to avoid "stigmatizing" black students by placing them in an all-black program. Black faculty and students have a different explanation. They see the inclusion of white students as at best a weakening of commitment to black students and at worst a move to discontinue the program. Black students and faculty contend that for STP space allocated to whites, there is, therefore, one less space for a black student needing academic assistance. The lessening of opportunity for the non-high achieving black student could result in only a black elite being accepted at Duke. This issue, by no means restricted to Duke, will be expanded upon, later.

All of the universities studied have black personnel in their admissions offices. Some of these admissions officers concentrate

exclusively or primarily on recruiting black students; others are assigned to recruit and assist with the admissions of a general population.

Except for Stanford, each of the universities has or had a special program to assist the academic adjustment of black students whose admissions credentials (SAT's, rank in class, GPA) don't qualify them for regular admission or whose academic projections suggest difficulty in remaining in school. Even Harvard, whose black students' College Board scores average 100 points above their nearest rivals, Yale and Princeton, found it necessary to establish an "Efficacy Seminar," which is not a remedial effort, but an attempt to help students systematically structure their goals and the utilization of their time. The University of Chicago had a special program for two years 1971-73, but has discontinued it. Michigan has an Opportunity Program which provides for special admissions, financial aid and academic and "other necessary support." Rutgers has a State Educational Opportunity Fund Program which, supplemented by university funds, provides financial aid and academic support services. UCLA has a Freshman Summer Program and an Academic Advancement Program which provide academic support services.

Interviews with Directors of Admissions have revealed a very serious issue, mentioned earlier, the trend of universities surveyed to discontinue interest in the black student who comes from a low-achieving inner-city high school. One admissions director from a private university put it bluntly: "If we had two black students to choose from, with almost identical admissions

prerequisites, we would choose the one from the private school." Asked why this choice, the director responded, "Parochial and prep school graduates have been socialized to fit into our academic and social requirements better than those of the public schools." This preference for students from private schools over those with equal qualifications from public (mostly inner-city) schools was echoed by most of the Directors of Admissions interviewed. It portends a potentially elitist admissions policy in which very few students from all-black inner-city schools will be found at the most prestigious universities, public or private.

Presently, at Harvard 25% of the black population is middle and upper-middle class and 75% come from predominantly white communities and attended predominantly white schools. In 1969, 40% of the black population came from the lower class. A Harvard official looked at this shift as a very positive sign: "It is right for Harvard and better for the students, because there is better adjustment and less desperate alienation."

The highly selective admissions policies which look not only for the highest achievers but also for those who have been socialized in white environments, combined with on-campus pressures to deracialize blacks, can result in the development of an elite black leadership who have little identity with their black roots and who, accordingly, feel little responsibility for the black underclass.

This crucial issue is not only apparent at Stanford, Harvard, Chicago and Duke, the elite privates, but also is emergent, though to a lesser extent, at Rutgers, UCLA and Michigan.

VI. Attrition

Even the incomplete attrition data available suggest an alarming rate of failure. At Chicago, private, and Michigan, public, the rate is about 43% Considering Chicago's far more selective admissions policy, this rate of failure for black students is enormous (Table II). Rutgers and UCLA, both public, have provided incomplete data but UCLA's black freshmen flunk out at a rate of 31% and Rutgers' special program, EOP, students flunk at a rate of 28%. Neither of these figures describes more than a fraction of black students on both campuses. Duke reports a small rate of 20%, Harvard reports negligible black attrition, with 50% of the black population doing honors work, compared with 80% of the white population doing honors work. Stanford reports it has no data.

In spite of special programs of academic and financial aid at Rutgers, Michigan and UCLA, attrition is a major problem. Chicago, which provides financial aid but no special academic assistance also has a major attrition problem. Harvard, which admits the cream of the black crop, provides financial aid and conducts a special seminar to assist them, has no special attrition problem. Duke, which provides financial aid and has a special academic assistance program, has a modest problem. Stanford provides financial aid, has no special academic assistance program and has no data on attrition.

Table II

Attrition

Chicago	43%
Duke	20%
Harvard	No data [a]
Michigan	42.7%
Rutgers	Incomplete data [b]
Stanford	No data
UCLA	26% [c]

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[a] A special assistant to Harvard's president indicated that due to Harvard's selectivity, attrition was negligible, almost non-existent.

[b] The university could provide attrition data for only the Equal Opportunity Program of Rutgers College, which is one of four undergraduate colleges. The EOP, which is not limited to black students, has an attrition rate of 28% for the Class of '78. Students believe the attrition rate is at least twice as much.

[c] This figure does not present a true picture. It is based on the only data provided by the university. Data for attrition of entering freshmen reveals an average attrition of 31%; for entering juniors the figure is 21%. Overall for new black freshmen and new black juniors the combined attrition rate is 26%. Obviously this figure does not account for students who drop out at other levels, namely, second term freshmen, sophomores, second term juniors and seniors.

VII. Questionnaire Responses

Three groups of respondents were asked to respond to a questionnaire by indicating their perceptions in three areas: (1) barriers to admission to their university (2) barriers to remaining at the university and (3) possible remedies to those problems. Black students, black faculty/administrators and white faculty/administrators were asked to respond to each item by selecting one of the following responses:

(1) unimportant
(2) slightly important
(3) somewhat important
(4) very important

Items perceived as untrue in fact were to be marked unimportant.

The analysis which follows is of the overall responses of the three groups at the seven universities. An item which has a combined "somewhat important/very important" response of 70% or better is assumed to be an important barrier or remedy as perceived by the responding group.

Perceptions of Problems

1. Student perceptions (84 respondents)

In response to the questionnaire, student perceptions of the most important barriers to admission are as follows:

A. Black students have poor secondary school preparation.
(1) somewhat important - 24
(2) very important - 49 (86%)

B. Cultural/racial identity adjustments.

(1) somewhat important - 29

(2) very important - 41 (83%)

C. The university is perceived as a hostile institution.

(1) somewhat important - 29

(2) very important - 38 (79%)

D. The university does not actively recruit black students.

(1) somewhat important - 17

(2) very important - 49 (78%)

E. Inadequate financial aid.

(1) somewhat important - 15

(2) very important - 50 (77%)

F. The university is perceived by black students as an institution that traditionally has not welcomed them.

(1) somewhat important - 23

(2) very important - 39 (74%)

G. High school counselors don't encourage students to attend the university.

(1) somewhat important - 23

(2) very important - 39 (74%)

With regard to barriers to remaining, once admitted, students perceived the following:

A. Feelings of alienation and loneliness.
   (1) somewhat important - 21
   (2) very important - 56 (91%)

B. Inadequate financial aid
   (1) somewhat important - 8
   (2) very important - 66 (88%)

C. Cultural/racial identity adjustments.
   (1) somewhat important - 29
   (2) very important - 41 (83%)

D. Hostile environment.
   (1) somewhat important - 25
   (2) very important - 45 (83%)

E. Sexual/social relationships.
   (1) somewhat important - 37
   (2) very important - 22 (70%)

The most important remedies suggested by students are

A. More black faculty/administrative models.
   (1) somewhat important - 12
   (2) very important - 67 (94%)

B. Improved financial aid
   (1) somewhat important - 8
   (2) very important - 66 (88%)

C. More direct contact, such as conferences, with professors.

(1) somewhat important - 26

(2) very important - 46 (85%)

D. Assistance in securing part-time (during school) and summer jobs.

(1) somewhat important - 30

(2) very important - 39 (82%)

E. Improved counseling facilities.

(1) somewhat important - 27

(2) very important - 41 (80%)

F. Improved remedial and tutorial programs.

(1) somewhat important - 24

(2) very important - 43 (79%)

G. An organized program of black cultural activities, throughout the school year.

(1) somewhat important - 23

(2) very important - 44 (79%)

H. Special pre-college programs to compensate for poor secondary school preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 27

(2) very important - 36 (75%)

I. More systematic studying by black students.

(1) somewhat important - 24

(2) very important - 38 (74%)

J. Greater participation in Black campus organizations.

(1) somewhat important - 24

(2) very important - 38 (74%)

K. Greater participation in the general university social and political activities.

(1) somewhat important - 21

(2) very important - 38 (70%)

2. Black Faculty/Administrator Perceptions (47 respondents)

Barriers to admission:

A. Poor secondary school preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 27 (85%)

B. The university is perceived as a hostile institution.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 27 (85%)

C. The university is perceived as a place that has not traditionally welcomed them.

(1) somewhat important - 11

(2) very important - 28 (82%)

D. Adequate financial support is not available.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 22 (74%)

E. High school counselors don't encourage black students to attend the university.

(1) somewhat important - 14

(2) very important - 21 (74%)

Barriers to remaining at the university:

A. Student feelings of alienation and loneliness.

(1) somewhat important - 14

(2) very important - 31 (96%)

B. An environment perceived as hostile.

(1) somewhat important - 10

(2) very important - 29 (83%)

C. Failure to use available counseling services.

(1) somewhat important - 15

(2) very important - 23 (81%)

D. Inadequate secondary school preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 14

(2) very important - 23 (79%)

E. Cultural/racial identity adjustments.

(1) somewhat important - 16

(2) very important - 20 (77%)

F. Inadequate financial aid.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 23 (77%)

Possible remedies:

A. More black faculty/administrators, staff models for students.

(1) somewhat important - 7

(2) very important - 40 (100%)

B. More direct contact, such as conferences with professors.

(1) somewhat important - 12

(2) very important - 30 (89%)

C. Improved financial aid.

(1) somewhat important - 9

(2) very important - 31 (85%)

D. More systematic studying by black students.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 26 (83%)

E. Improved counseling facilities.

(1) somewhat important - 9

(2) very important - 28 (79%)

F. Assistance in securing part-time (during school) and summer jobs.

(1) somewhat important - 14

(2) very important - 23 (79%)

G. Improved remedial and tutorial programs.

(1) somewhat important - 15

(2) very important - 22 (79%)

H. Greater participation in the general university social and political activities.

(1) somewhat important - 14

(2) very important - 21 (74%)

I. Special pre-college programs to compensate for poor secondary school preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 20 (70%)

3. White Faculty/Administrators' Perceptions (38 respondents)

Barriers to admission:

A. Poor secondary preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 7

(2) very important - 21 (74%)

The above is the only item receiving a combined 70% perception as a barrier to admission.

Barriers to remaining at the university:

A. Inadequate secondary school preparation.

(1) somewhat important - 13

(2) very important - 18 (82%)

B. Cultural/racial identity adjustments.

(1) somewhat important - 23

(2) very important - 6 (76%)

C. Feelings of alienation and loneliness.

(1) somewhat important - 16

(2) very important - 12 (74%)

Possible remedies:

A. More direct contact, such as conferences with professors.

(1) somewhat important - 12

(2) very important - 15 (71%)

The above is the only item receiving a combined 70% perception as a remedy to the problems of black students.

Responses to the questionnaire reveal that black students and black faculty/administrators have very similar perceptions of the barriers to admission and to remaining at the university, as well as of possible remedies. On several of the issues, however, only students or faculty/administrators give great importance to the issue.

This similarity of perception does not hold for white faculty/administrators, however. Except for a few issues, the perceptions of white faculty/administrators are very different from those of black students and black faculty/administrators. (Table III).

In the area of barriers to admission there is close agreement among the three groups only on the issue of poor secondary school preparation being a major factor. Black faculty/administrators (46%) are not much agreed with black students (78%) on the issue of indifferent university recruitment. White faculty/administrators (13%) are far apart from both. The rest of the issues are seen similarly by black students and black faculty/administrators, with white perceptions being very different.

In the area of barriers to remaining at the university black students (88%) and black faculty/administrators (77%),

differ greatly from white perceptions (31%) on inadequate financial aid. Another important distinction is seen in the perception of black student alienation and loneliness (students 91%; black faculty/administrators 96%; white faculty/administrators 60%.) The only area of common perception is cultural/racial identity adjustments (students 83%; black faculty/administrators 77%; white faculty/administrators 76%).

Perceived remedies also reveal different black and white perceptions. In the areas of improved counseling, remedial and tutorial efforts black students (79.5%) and black faculty/administrators (79%) are practically identical; white perceptions are 57%. It is also clear that black faculty/administrators (100%) and student perceptions (94%) of the need for more black faculty, administrative and staff models are shared by only 68% of the white respondents. Similarly black perception of the need for an organized program of black cultural activities is supported by 79% of the students, 65% of the black faculty/administrators, but only 26% of the white faculty/administrators. This latter group identified black student cultural/racial adjustments as a barrier to remaining at the university (68% response) but rejected black cultural activities, black organizations and only mildly supported the acquisition of more black models as solutions to improving black students' survival chances at the universities.

Table III

Comparison of Perceptions of Main Issues

Issue	Percent Agreement		
	Black Students	Black faculty/ administrator	White faculty/ administrator
Barriers to Admission:			
1. Poor secondary preparation	86	85	74
2. Indifferent recruitment	78	46	13
3. Inadequate financial support	77	74	26
4. Hostile university	79	85	65
5. University traditionally has not welcomed blacks	74	82	63
Barriers to Remaining:			
1. Inadequate financial aid	88	77	31
2. Feelings of alienation and loneliness	91	96	60
3. Failure to use available counseling	55	81	60
4. Inadequate secondary school preparation	61	79	82
5. Cultural/racial identity adjustments	83	77	76
6. Sexual/social relationships	70	59	36
Remedies:			
1. Improved counseling facilities	80	79	57
2. Improved remedial and tutorial programs	79	79	57
3. Improved financial aid	88	85	42
4. An organized program of black cultural activities throughout the year	79	65	26

Table III (con't)

Issue	Percent Agreement		
	Black Students	Black faculty/ administrator	White faculty/ administrator
5. More black administrative faculty and staff models	94	100	68
6. Assistance in securing part-time and summer jobs	82	79	60
7. More direct contact with professors	85	89	71
8. More systematic study by black students	73	83	68
9. Special pre-college programs	75	70	65
10. Greater participation in black organizations	73	52	23
11. Greater participation in general university social and political activities	70	74	52

VIII. Summary

Interviews were conducted with and questionnaires were administered to black students, black faculty and administrators and white faculty and administrators at seven universities.

Black students find themselves in a hostile environment at all of the universities, a perception concurred in by black faculty/administrators and recognized by almost two-thirds of the white respondents. The students suffer from inadequate financial support and are often handicapped by poor secondary school preparation. They are caught in a whirlwind of confusing racial identity and heavy academic stresses. Their academic adjustment is further complicated by a racist environment which tells them that they don't deserve to be at the predominantly white university and which demands that they conform to the cultural norm of the university by denying their black culture.

Black students have ambivalent feelings toward black faculty and administrators. They see greater numbers of black models as highly beneficial, but at the same time feel that most of the black faculty/administrators presently on campus don't relate to them and don't care about them.

Black faculty, on the other hand, do see the problems and solutions very similarly to the students' perceptions. They show far greater understanding of the students than do white faculty and administrators. However, these black faculty and administrators have failed to develop mechanisms to relate to black students and to help them with their problems. There are, in fact, few trained black counselors on any of the campuses.

This is not a need perceived by most of the white administrators.

Black admissions patterns are different for the seven universities. In some, admissions peaked and programs of support emerged just after Dr. King's death and then began to decline in the 70's. In others there has been a small, steady increase. Admissions remain less than 7% in all of the universities except Rutgers which had steadily increased to around 14%.

Admissions policies are being revised or revisions being considered in a number of the universities, to require higher college board scores and rank in class. Beyond this requirement, which threatens to curtail black enrollments, is the move toward selecting the most elite black students, to the exclusion of lower class, poor students. Such a trend, already apparent at Harvard and Stanford, could result in a trained black elite who came from the middle class, live in predominantly white neighborhoods, who attended predominantly white high schools, who were rewarded for deracializing themselves at the university and who as college graduates reject their roots and feel little responsibility for the black underclass. Should this occur, the gap between black middle-class and the black poor will grow even wider.

Attrition appears to be no problem for the black elite of Harvard; the rate at Duke is modest; it is unknown at Stanford. At Chicago and Michigan the dropout rate of almost 43% is alarmingly high; at UCLA and Rutgers, where data is incomplete, the rates reported are fairly high.

Many of the universities seem to believe the solution to keeping the attrition rate low, or reducing already high attrition rates, is to raise admissions standards and to select from the private schools. This kind of solution would be devastating to the educational aspirations of the poor black students from the inner cities. This investigator does not see a policy of elitism as solving the higher educational needs of black Americans.

Poor academic preparation in secondary schools appear to be the main barrier to access to higher education at the seven universities studied. Once students have been admitted, however, poor academic preparation does not appear to be the main barrier to successful matriculation. In fact, none of the respondent groups placed this issue anywhere near the top of their list of perceptions. Other factors, cultural/racial adjustments, financial problems, loneliness and alienation, hostility from white professors and students, lack of counseling help with problems, scarcity of black faculty models and poor communication with black faculty all rank with or above academic preparation as causal factors for academic failure.

Recommendations

Admissions Policies

Admissions policies should continue to recognize an obligation to admit black students from underachieving inner-city high schools. Policies which are formulated to admit only high achieving students who have been socialized to fit the university's image will exclude the majority of black youth.

Recruitment

Recruitment policies flow from admissions policies. Universities should seek out students from all-black or predominantly black inner-city schools as vigorously as black "preppies" and others from private or suburban schools are sought.

Black personnel should be utilized to recruit black students. Schedules should be arranged so that black schools are visited early in the recruitment process, rather than late or last as is often the case.

Close communication with high school counselors should be maintained. Often counselors need to be convinced to encourage students to apply to state or select private universities. Also counselors should be encouraged to follow-up on students who are frequently slow in completing their applications.

Pre-College Programs

Universities are encouraged to institute or continue special pre-college programs such as the STP at Duke which provides academic strengthening during the summer prior to freshman enrollment. Students with poor secondary school backgrounds are likely to need help in mathematics, reading and writing. They are also likely to need instruction in how to study.

During the freshman year, it is important that students have opportunities for continuing contact with the academic, tutorial and counseling facilities which are part of or similar to those of the pre-college program.

Orientation

Most black students will need an orientation to the university which will assist them in several areas:

1. To feel that they deserve to be at the university in spite of attitudes or actions to the contrary.

2. To understand the academic expectations of the university and to learn, very early, how to go about satisfying those expectations.

3. To plan personal goals, which may be in keeping with, or in addition to goals of the university.

4. To learn where resources are located which can be useful in satisfying academic, social, psychological and economic needs.

Counseling

This is a critical area of need. Black students are subjected to extraordinary pressures at predominantly white universities. Even those who are well prepared academically have the burden of dealing with racism. Universities' environments transmit conflicting signals. Some black students are special admits and receive special financial assistance and sometimes special academic assistance. Universities communicate the feeling that "special" is inferior," a badge which is then hung on all black students, including those of highest academic ability and those with no financial need. At the same time the university transmits the signal that race is not an issue, that black students should be like everybody else. There should be no black societies.

no black dormitories, no black table, no black self. Black students put pressures on each other in similarly conflicting ways: to support divestiture; to support black studies; to belong to black societies; to date black; to intergrate; to avoid being "stigmatized" as black; to de-emphasize race; to relate to other races socially.

Every day black students live with these conflicting social pressures, which only exacerbate the already enormous academic pressures.

Black counseling personnel should be hired whose own philosophies will permit them to help the students to be comfortable with their black selves and their roots and, at the same time to function in the larger university community. Universities have shown that they do not recognize the need for trained black counselors to work with black students. Such personnel were conspicuously absent from the campuses of this study.

Cultural Adjustment

Beyond the need for orientation and continuous counseling availability, black students need their organizations and cultural activities as important means for dealing with hostile environments and essential elements of assuring their development of healthy attitudes toward themselves and other black people.

Universities should encourage not discourage black student awareness of the positiveness of their heritage.

White Faculty/Administrator Awareness

Presidents of universities and other high ranking administrators should take the leadership in helping their faculties to be more effective in teaching black students.

Such a process is likely to involve many factors:

1. Awareness of racial attitudes and preferences.
2. Re-examination of curricular content.
3. Assessment of teaching strategies.
4. Re-examination of assumptions about who should be served by the university, who "fits" the university's image and what's good (socially/racially) for the entire university.

Leadership should also be exercised to end the harassment by campus security or local police.

The process of administrators, their faculties and staffs becoming more aware of black students' needs and how to satisfy those needs might take the form of seminars in teaching, group discussions, lectures and seminars in black culture or other group process activities.

Black Faculty-Administrators

The most important solution to the problems black students face was identified by both black students and black faculty/administrators as the availability of more black faculty, administrators and staff to serve as models of achievement and to be resources to assist students with their problems. This study agrees with that conclusion.

But the mere presence of increased numbers of black professionals will not serve the need, unless those professionals develop mechanisms for direct and continous contact with black students. Some black faculty and administrators will require similar sensitizing to that advocated for their white colleagues. Black faculty and administrators ought to see their roles as academicians or administrators who serve the total university population, but, beyond, as black men and women they have an additional obligation to serve as models, mentors and friends of black students.

Contact with Faculty

The universities should encourage and provide mechanisms for more contact between black students and the general faculty, particularly professors under whom black students are currently studying.

This contact could come in the orm of personal conferences, lunch or dinner with the professor and groups of students or other creative patterns.

Financial Assistance

All of the universities studied provide financial assistance based on need assessment. An aid package consisting of a combination of grant, loan and work is typical.

Students complain of the inadequacy of the aid package, frequently of the burden of work in the freshman year and of being unable to meet emergencies.

Black students need greater financial assistance. In

addition, where possible, their needs should be met with greater amounts of grant money, fewer loans and work should not be required of freshmen. With black youth unemployment at a level of almost 60% it is unrealistic to require that summer earnings be a part of the yearly budget. Where the university is able to assist its black students to secure summer jobs, then this requirement can and should be met.

As at the university of Chicago, contingency funds should be available to help meet emergencies.

Further Study

It is the recommendation of this investigator that other universities similar to the ones in this study be surveyed.

Further, investigations of graduate and professional school programs need close scrutiny.

Such studies, however, should be undertaken by teams of researchers, adequately funded for in-depth investigation.

Data Availability

The U.S. Office of Education should require annual data from colleges and universities which give accurate information on such matters as changes in admissions policies, recruitment procedures, numbers of applicants and admits, and attrition data at all levels.